DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 271 855 EA 018 644

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TITLE A State in Action: Working with Schools for Program Improvement. Symposium Presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (67th, San Francisco, California, April 16-20, 1986). Session 813.
PUB DATE Apr 86
NOTE 72p.; For individual papers, see EA 018 645-650. Some materials contain small print.
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Collected Works - Conference Proceedings (021)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Curriculum Development; Decentralization; Educational Change; Educational Policy; Elementary Secondary Education; Foreign Countries; *Government School Relationship; Participative Decision Making; Program Implementation; State Departments of Education; *State Programs
IDENTIFIERS Australia (Victoria)

ABSTRACT

Recent efforts by the Ministry of Education in the state of Victoria, Australia, to combine decentralization of educational policy decision making with guidance for local schools in the development of appropriate curricula were the focus of this symposium. The six presentations made on that occasion are collected in this document. Robin Matthews's paper, "Education in Victoria: The Context," opened the symposium with a review of political change in Victoria and its impact on educational policy. Elaine Atkinson described the scope of curriculum initiatives in Victoria in "A State-Wide Implementation Program to Support Government Policy Initiatives in Education." In his paper, "In Search of a More Coherent Curriculum: Developing Curriculum Frameworks," Max Stephens reported on the progress of a project for encouraging new efforts at coordinated curriculum development. Bob Boyd discussed the process of finding consensus among diverse groups in "Collaborative Decision Making in Local Development of School Policy and Practices." Maurice Robson spoke on "Identifying Processes for Coherent Curriculum Planning at a School Level: The Ministerial Paper No. 6 and School Project." The final speaker, John Atkinson, reviewed the efforts of a program sponsored by Victoria College in a paper entitled "The School Support Group: An Innovation in College-Based Consultancy." References and the names and addresses of the presenters are included. (PGD)

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SESSION #8.13

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A STATE IN ACTION:

WORKING WITH SCHOOLS

FOR PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT

EA 018 644

SYMPOSIUM PRESENTED AT THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE AMERICAN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

SAN FRANCISCO, APRIL 1986

VICTORIA

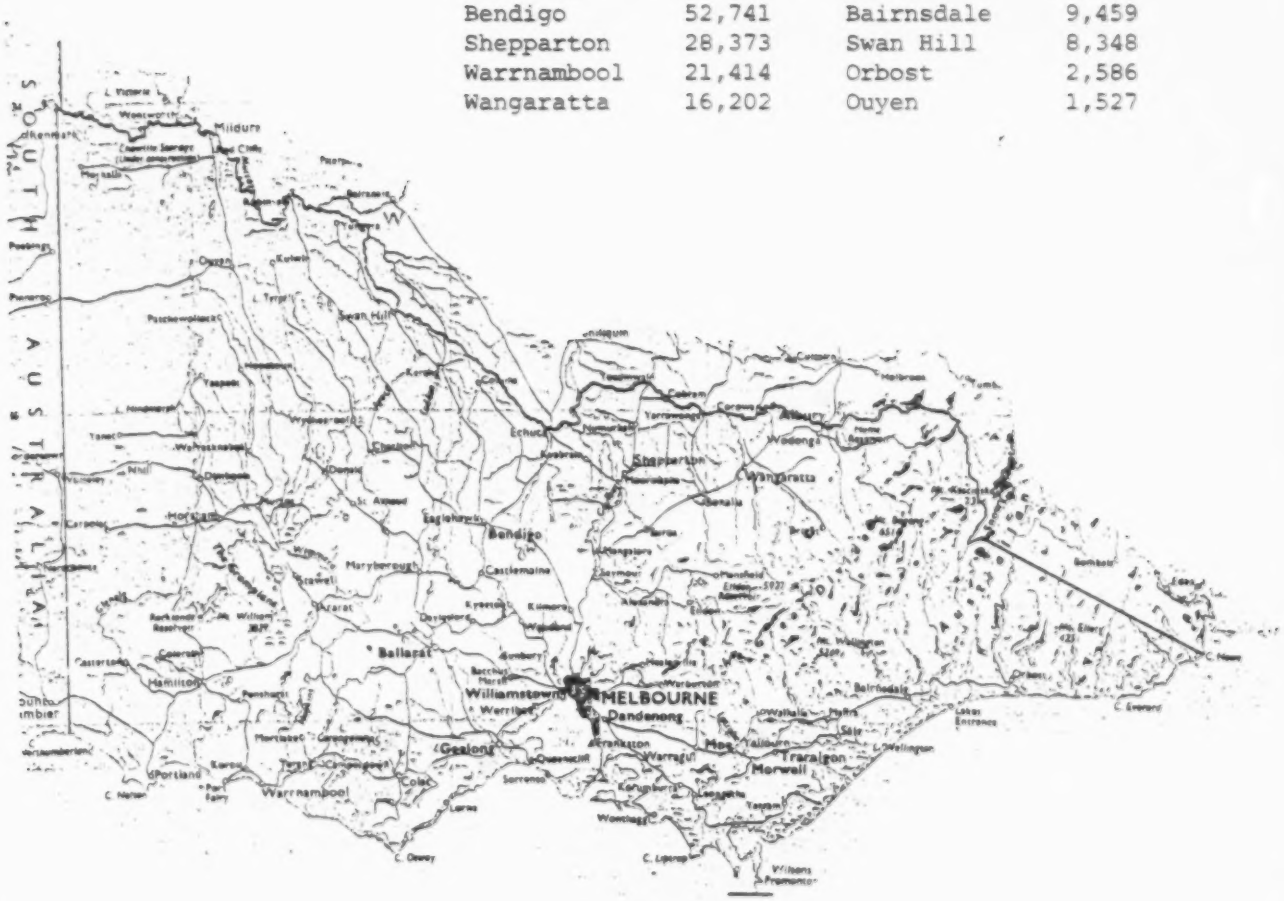
AREA: 227,600 sq. km. (142,250 sq. mls.)

POPULATION: 4.07 million

MAJOR CITIES AND SELECTED TOWNS:

State Capital: Melbourne 2,578,759

Geelong	125,279	Mildura	15,763
Ballarat	62,641	Horsham	12,034
Bendigo	52,741	Bairnsdale	9,459
Shepparton	28,373	Swan Hill	8,348
Warrnambool	21,414	Orbost	2,586
Wangaratta	16,202	Ouyen	1,527



Number of students 564,984
Number of teachers 46,107
Number of schools 2,108

Victoria has a multicultural society with about 24% of the population having been born outside Australia. This group represents more than 40 different nationalities.

A STATE IN ACTION:
WORKING WITH SCHOOLS
FOR PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT

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EDUCATION IN VICTORIA - THE CONTEXT

Robin Matthews

Victoria College - Rusden Campus
Australia

Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the
American Educational Research Association,
San Francisco, April, 1986

EDUCATION IN VICTORIA - THE CONTEXT

> "For more than a decade Victorian schools have been assuming increasing responsibility for their own curricula. Devolution of this responsibility to schools has already led to much thoughtful and imaginative innovation and has brought curriculum issues to the forefront of public discussion. The Government intends that the devolution of curriculum development be extended and set within clear guidelines for planning at the school level."
>
> Ministerial Paper No. 6: Curriculum Development and Planning in Victoria

In Australia, during the early 1980's the Labour Party gained government at both Federal and Victorian State levels. These governments support progressive social policies aimed at redressing social imbalances and inequities in society. In education, programs such as the Disadvantaged Schools Program and the Participation and Equity Program were developed at the Federal level, while at the State level, a number of Ministerial Reviews and Papers were initiated. All of these initiatives focussed attention on such issues as access and success for all, democratic decision making and shared responsibility in a rapidly changing social context including rapid technological advances and high youth unemployment.

While under the Australian Constitution education is the responsibility of the States, the Government provides the funding through return of federally collected Income Tax revenue and through special grants and programs.

The series of Ministerial Papers were developed to clarify the Victorian State Government's expectations for schools.

Ministerial Paper No. 1: Decision making in Victorian Education (1983)
No. 2: The School Improvement Plan (1982)
No. 3: The State Board of Education (1983)
No. 4: School Councils (1983)
No. 5: Regional Boards of Education (1984)
No. 6: Curriculum Development and Planning in Victoria (1984)

These policy documents reflected the shift in emphasis towards wider participation by the community in educational decision making and the resulting empowerment of both parents and students in this process. Changes to the membership and functions of School Councils made them more representative of the major interest groups (teachers, parents and students) and increased their powers.

> "Schools are ... seen to be the focal point in the educative process and it is expected that they will determine their own curricula, within the principles and framework of Government policy."
>
> Ministerial Paper No. 3: Decision Making in Victorian Education

In terms of curricula in schools, Ministerial Paper No. 6: Curriculum Development and Planning in Victoria provides the broad framework and elaborates the Government's general educational philosophy.

The complementary roles of schools and the Government in the development of curriculum are described as follows:

> "Schools are charged with the responsibility of providing all young people with experiences that cannot be readily or universally gained through other life experiences and that are necessary for them to become effective adults.
>
> "In discharging this responsibility the schools central commitment must be to provide a broad general education for all.
>
> "... the Government must ensure that schools do not devise programs that promote narrow, sectional interests or that exclude important aspects of learning. More positively, schools can expect to be provided with a coherent framework which will assist them in making decisions about their curricula. This is the purpose of this document."

This trend to devolution of responsibility for education also involved the formation of regions within the (then) Education Department. In broad terms the Regional Boards of Education were established to provide a link between schools and the central office in Melbourne. These regional boards are

> "a key element in the process through which the needs of schools, as a group, are identified and examined, priorities determined for the nature and extent of services and resources needed in the region, and guidelines defined for the deployment and management of these resources and services."
>
> Ministerial Paper No. 5: Regional Boards of Education

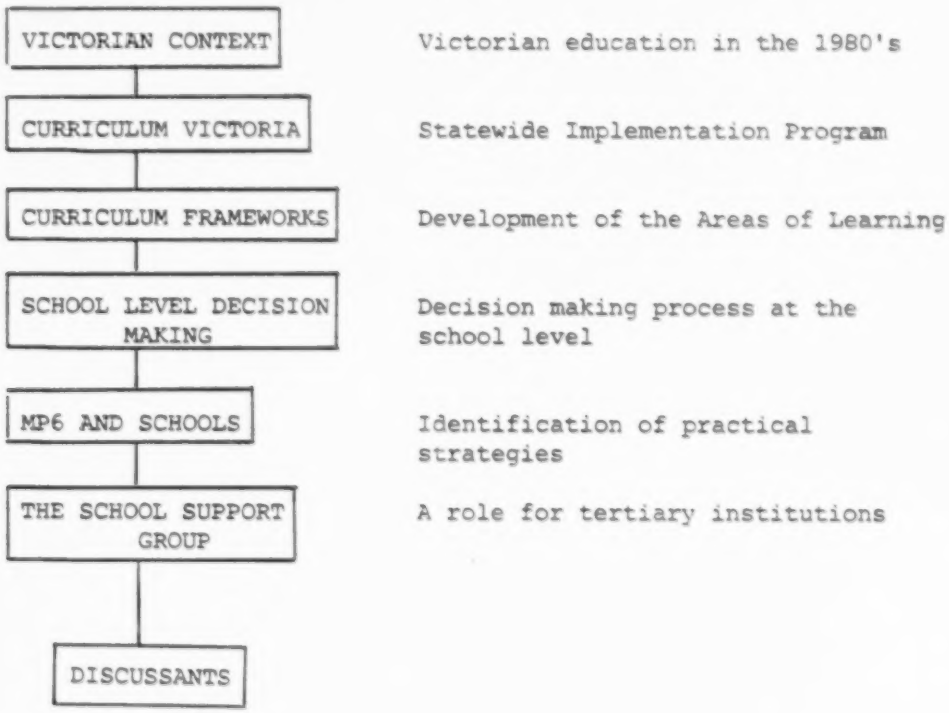
The regions are also expected to manage such aspects as the maintenance and building programs of schools, and to act as a source of advice to the Ministry of Education in relation to long term plans for education in the region.

This symposium enlarges on the strategies and processes adopted by various levels of the system to implement the policy guidelines contained in Ministerial Paper No. 6.

The processes of development and implementation embraced by the Ministry of Education have been supplemented by contributions from both individuals and groups within the tertiary institutions of Victoria.

One of these, Victoria College, has played a significant role through individual academics being members of writing teams and development committees, and through contract work. Victoria College is the State's largest provider of teachers and its involvement in the present curriculum developments reflects not only its longstanding interest in the field but also its considerable pool of available expertise.

The general structure of the symposium can be shown as follows:



A STATE-WIDE IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM TO SUPPORT GOVERNMENT POLICY INITIATIVES IN EDUCATION

Elaine Atkinson

Ministry of Education
Victoria, Australia

Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the
American Educational Research Association,
San Francisco, April, 1986

A STATE-WIDE IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM TO SUPPORT GOVERNMENT POLICY INITIATIVES IN EDUCATION

BACKGROUND:

Over the past few years the number of groups seeking to influence the State Minister of Education's decisions on educational matters has increased significantly. Prior to that time the Education Department was virtually the sole adviser (Attachment 1). At the Minister's request the State Board of Education was asked to develop Ministerial Paper No. 6. The development process was a consultative one involving close collaboration with the Education Department and the Victorian Institute of Secondary Education and considerable opportunity for input from the wider community.

CONTENTS:

The major thrusts of Ministerial Paper No. 6 may be summed up as follows:

1. Schooling for living
2. Shared responsibility
3. Democratic decision making
4. Access for all
5. Success for all
6. Assessment which supports learning
7. A positive view of learning
8. Variety in learning
9. Relating learning to action
10. Key areas of learning.

IMPLEMENTATION: THE BEGINNINGS

As the Ministerial Paper was nearing completion, senior administrators of the Education Department, the State Board of Education and the Victorian Institute of Secondary Education met and recommended to the Minister that a Curriculum Implementation Committee be established comprising representatives of the three organisations. The purpose of the Committee was to develop and carry out an implementation strategy. The Minister accepted the recommendation. In retrospect this Committee should have been set up earlier and the implementation strategy more clearly developed.

IMPLEMENTATION: THE CHALLENGE

The challenge faced by the Curriculum Implementation Committee was how to achieve awareness, acceptance and adoption of the broad principles embodied in the Paper in a system of 2,108 schools, 564,984 students and 46,107 teachers within a context of local school responsibility for curriculum decisions.

While the consultative process by which the Paper was developed had gone some way to ensuring awareness and acceptance, and the Paper itself reflected the best of what was already happening in schools, it was clear that the challenge was indeed formidable.

The strategy for implementation would need to embody the following elements:

- ensure state wide impact;
- develop ways of working with regions and with schools in a partnership process;
- empower parents, students and other community members through School Councils to contribute to curriculum policy decisions.

IMPLEMENTATION: THE STRATEGY

The Curriculum Implementation Committee eventually agreed upon a multifaceted strategy, "Curriculum Victoria", comprising the following elements:

CURRICULUM VICTORIA

IMPLEMENTATION OF MINISTERIAL PAPER NUMBER 6

A. CURRICULUM FRAMEWORKS	B. PAMPHLETS AND BIBLIOGRAPHIES	C. PAPERS ON EDUCATIONAL ISSUES AND STRATEGIES	D. INFORMATION EXCHANGE AND DISSEMINATION	E. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
- School curriculum and organisation - Nine curriculum areas	- Brief summaries and selected bibliographies on significant aspects of Ministerial Paper No. 6	- Discussion papers exploring major themes of significance in Ministerial Paper No. 6	- Ideas booklets - Ed Line - Exemplary programs in schools	- Regional state-wide development activities

A chart setting out this information was developed and distributed throughout the system in September, 1985.

A. Curriculum Frameworks

The Curriculum Frameworks was the responsibility of the Education Department. The next paper is specifically concerned with this project.

B. Pamphlets and Bibliographies

The pamphlets, each a single A4 size sheet, explain in simple terms major issues addressed in the Ministerial Paper.

Topics include

- An introduction to Ministerial Paper No. 6
- Ways of grouping students
- Assessment
- Reporting
- Areas of learning
- Approaches to teaching and learning
- The inclusive curriculum
- Student participation
- Parent participation

The State Board of Education has been responsible for the development of these sets of resources which are designed to help make the ideas of the Ministerial Paper accessible to school communities.

The annotated bibliographies list documents of assistance to schools in the areas of

- Integration
- Parent participation
- Assessment and reporting
- School organisation
- Negotiating the curriculum
- Ways of grouping students
- Teaching languages other than English
- The education of girls.

C. Papers on Educational Issues and Strategies

A series of papers on educational issues and strategies were proposed to provide school communities and others with practical suggestions and promote more informed discussion on major themes in the Ministerial Paper. Papers on six major themes are completed. The three organisations were responsible for their development.

• Access and Success • Individual Differences • Learning and Learning Styles • Teaching Strategies	Curriculum Branch, Education Department
• Negotiating the Curriculum	State Board of Education
• Assessment and Reporting	Victorian Institute of Secondary Education

These papers range from 20pp - 48pp in length.
A kit comprising items in Sections B and C is being published in April 1986.
A project team within the Ministry of Education was responsible for co-ordinating the production of the kit.

D. Information Exchange and Dissemination

A sharing of ideas and drawing on exemplars within the system was to be encouraged. The series of booklets Alternatives in School Organisation and the book Destination: Decisions, to assist schools in decision making, formed part of the contribution.

A computerised data base is being built up to provide ready access to information.

E. Professional Development

Professional development pervades all the sections A - D, but was kept separate for emphasis.

Professional development activities at the regional level were encouraged by providing each region with several thousand dollars to develop their own regional activities.

ANALYSIS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

(1) Positive aspects of the implementation process to date have included:

- the very positive response to the Curriculum Victoria charts, which helped schools and regional staff to see where various activities and developments fitted in the overall scheme
- the degree of momentum generated in particular regions and schools: a crucial factor in this was the injection of modest funding to each region for MP6 implementation, which led to some innovative thinking about how best to utilise it
- two in-service days conducted centrally for key staff of regions which were very successful, particularly in the sharing of what had already been achieved in particular regions and schools - a Curriculum Victoria resource package was provided for all participants
- formal visits by Senior Education Department staff to the regions to explain the role of the Curriculum Implementation Committee vis-a-vis Regional staff.

(2) Difficulties which have had to be faced:

- the sheer magnitude of the exercise and the management of it
- the inevitably slow pace of the implementation process as a result of its scope, the number of organisations and people involved and the commitment to collaborative decision making
- the failure to recognise the degree of resourcing required for such an enterprise

- uncertainty among teachers and School Councils as to the status of these curriculum 'guidelines' i.e. how prescriptive are they?

- how to facilitate effective communication and sharing of ideas and concerns both within and between all levels of the system.

(3) Changing contextual factors have also affected the implementation process:

- the release of the interim and final reports of the Ministerial Review of Post Compulsory Schooling which were perceived as more controversial and therefore newsworthy. This had the effect of "stealing the thunder" of the Curriculum Victoria initiatives and further confused the issue regarding responsibility for curriculum at Years 11 and 12.

- the tight economic climate and associated budgetary constraints resulting in limited resourcing of the implementation process.

THE CURRENT SITUATION

Despite the difficulties and changing conditions associated with the implemenation process the situation at present is that:

- the pamphlets, bibliographies and issues papers have recently been distributed to schools

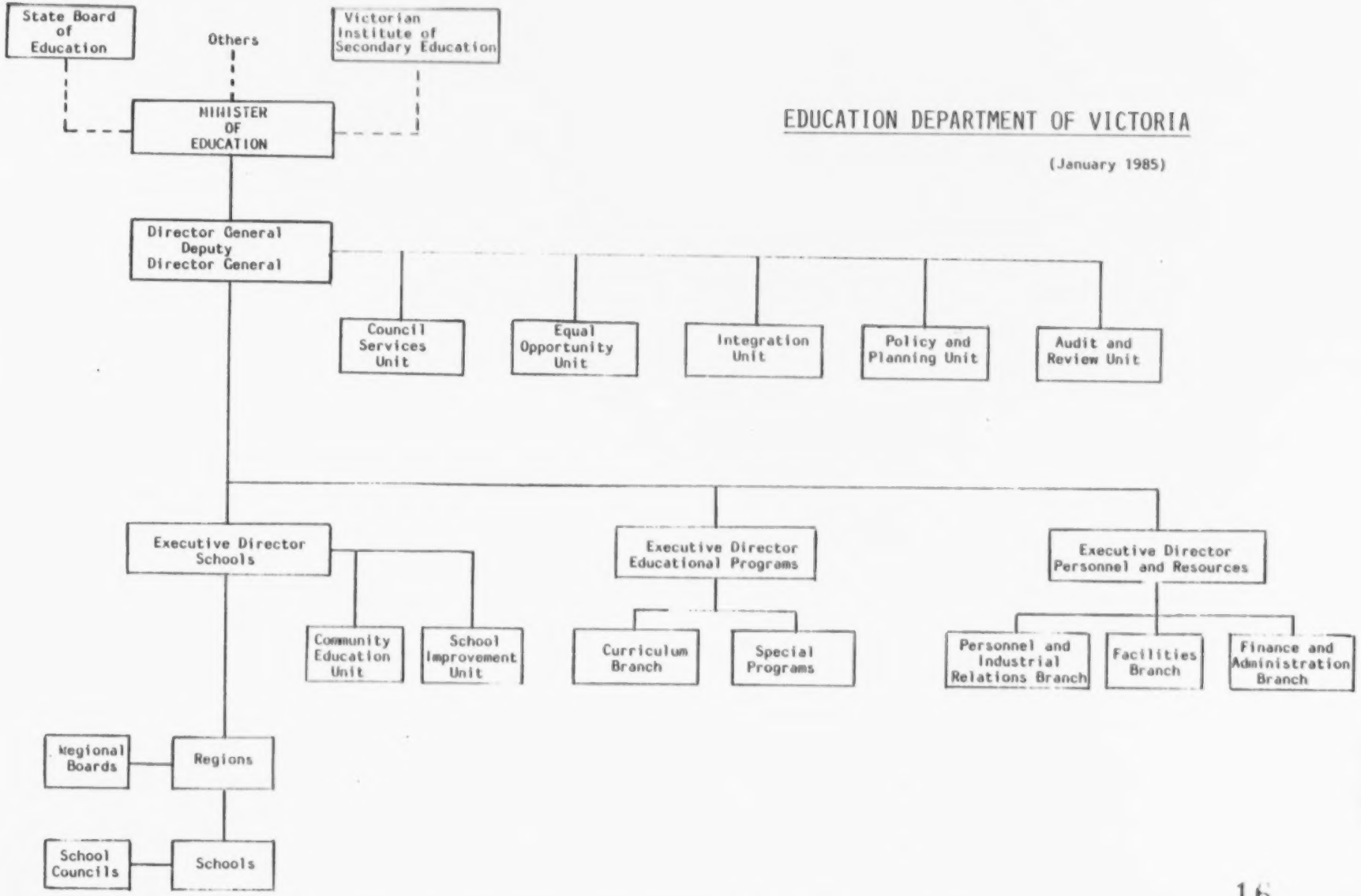
- there is to be a major State-wide Conference in May, to be held at La Trobe University, at which schools and other bodies will report on many aspects of progress towards the implementation by schools of the goals of Ministerial Paper No. 6

- regions have been made further modest grants to assist them in their implementation efforts.

This symposium paper has described the scope of curriculum initiatives in Victoria, which can truly be seen as a State in action. It is also a State in change. In November 1985 the Minister announced the formation of the Ministry of Education. The former Education Department is now the Ministry of Education (Schools Division) and the other two advisory bodies, the State Board of Education and the Victorian Institute of Secondary Education, have now been brought into the Ministry.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT OF VICTORIA

(January 1985)



Attachment 1

11.

IN SEARCH OF A MORE COHERENT CURRICULUM :

DEVELOPING CURRICULUM FRAMEWORKS

Max Stephens

Ministry of Education
Victoria, Australia

Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the
American Educational Research Association,
San Francisco, April, 1986

IN SEARCH OF A MORE COHERENT CURRICULUM

DEVELOPING CURRICULUM FRAMEWORKS

CURRICULUM FRAMEWORKS

For the Curriculum Frameworks Program my major concerns are:

- how to help school communities organize and manage and lead so that they can make things happen for themselves and not just be "in-serviced" by outside agencies.

- how to move beyond promoting and discussing ideas for school change, and instead to assist schools to grapple with the real issues of change.

- how to be a "smart filter" - locating key elements of government policy, refining powerful ideas for curriculum planning, moving them expeditiously into the range of the local school community, and finding the most productive ways for people to work with those ideas.

Using a more restrained language, the Curriculum Branch of the Ministry of Education outlined in 1985 its goals for Curriculum Frameworks. They will provide support and guidance for schools involved in planning and reviewing their curriculum. In particular, they will provide a context within which Ministerial Paper No.6, Curriculum Planning and Development in Victoria, can be adapted and used by schools. Curriculum Frameworks are intended to:

- help school councils to determine policies;
- enhance school-community participation and consultation;
- help schools to plan curricula systematically;
- develop a P-12 perspective on teaching and learning.

DEVOLUTION OF DECISION MAKING

Since the 1960s, Victorian schools have been given greater responsibility for making decisions about curriculum and school organization. Except in the final year of secondary school where the Higher School Certificate is based on externally prescribed courses and is assessed by a public examination, in most courses, schools have been able to plan courses of study with considerable freedom. The Curriculum Branch has developed guidelines in many subject areas for primary and post-primary schools. However, these have not been prescribed.

Their adoption has been a matter for local decision.

This process of devolution was affirmed in 1975 when School Councils were given responsibility under the School Councils Act to oversee their school's curriculum policy. In 1984, Ministerial Paper No.6, Curriculum Planning and Development in Victoria, stated that "the Government intends that the devolution of curriculum development be extended and set within clear guidelines for planning at the school level (2.1)".

Clearly, the practice of local schools taking increasing responsibility for curriculum development had preceded the new rhetoric of "devolution". Yet, it was in Ministerial Paper No.6 that the new government attempted to present a statement of principles which might guide schools in planning and reviewing their programs. Many of the aspirations of Ministerial Paper No.6 were not new. They had been articulated since the 1970s by teacher unions and by the Commonwealth Schools Commission. Its aspirations reflected issues of policy and practice with which many schools were already struggling to come to terms with: non-competitive assessment, redressing the disadvantages experienced by students of non-English speaking background, a more inclusive curriculum for female students, a commitment to mixed ability groupings and a rejection of "streaming", giving to young people themselves opportunities to shape their own work program, and so on. These issues had been the focus of vigorous debate in many school communities long before Ministerial Paper No.6 appeared in 1984.

Yet the rhetoric of Curriculum Planning and Development in Victoria was new. Its discourse about the curriculum contained powerful ideas such as "access and success". (See Attachment A). Further, its discourse was articulated not in terms of traditional subject areas. This tended to throw many teachers who looked in vain for a blueprint for a new school timetable. There was no way in which the thirty-two areas of learning of Ministerial Paper No.6 (see Attachment B) could be made to conform to a list of teaching subjects. How, then, could the rhetoric of Ministerial Paper No.6 support schools to develop and review their current programs?

In his speech at the launching of Ministerial Paper No.6, Curriculum Development and Planning in Victoria, Robert Fordham, the then Minister of Education, said:

> "The Curriculum Branch of the Education Department has begun a revision of the curriculum guidelines,

> which had previously been made available through the three teaching divisions of the Department. This revision will provide for systematic planning through all the areas of school from Prep Year to Year 12 in broad curriculum areas through a series of curriculum frameworks statements, and will provide advice which will assist schools to develop coherent programs across all areas of learning ... It is expected that a comprehensive set of curriculum frameworks statements will be prepared for release to schools and that the process of developing these frameworks will provide for wide consultation throughout the educational community".

In the first of the Ministerial Papers, Decision Making in Victorian Education, he stated that

> "In many cases schools will wish to sue centrally prepared curriculum materials or perhaps make only minor modifications to meet local needs. In a number of cases, however, schools will see the need to develop curricula in order to meet their own special needs.
>
> In both cases, there is an obligation on the part of the Government to provide curriculum support ...
>
> The role of the centre is to define general principles of curriculum and to provide curriculum materials of the highest quality which schools may adapt to suit local needs".

WHY CURRICULUM FRAMEWORKS?

Devolution of decision making to schools has achieved, I believe, very uneven outcomes. Alongside those schools which have been innovative in their curriculum planning, and are genuinely caring toward young people and are striving to ensure that all young people receive a comprehensive education, one has to recognise others which have moved scarcely at all from a rigid focus on a discipline-based curriculum.

Where this latter perspective is linked to structures which select and sort students from their early years of post-primary school, or even from their final years of primary school, where there are non-inclusive subject offerings according to gender or perceived ability, where there is an overriding concern for preparation and selection for tertiary education, there is a failure to ensure a broad and comprehensive education for all young people. Within the State sector, school communities still meet with opposition - from parents, teachers, or young people themselves - when challenge is directed to the assumptions and practices which prop up a competitive academic curriculum.

Contestation of these assumptions and their influence on school practice is made more difficult by the endorsement of a traditional academic curriculum by many schools in the non-government sector. I should also admit that local decision making in Government schools has sometimes resulted in curriculum change which has been superficial or merely nominal. In other instances, decisions about school curriculum have been divisive of the local community; and have resulted in a withdrawal of parent support in favour of the private system.

"Why Curriculum Frameworks?" can be justified if one believes that a Ministry of Education through its Curriculum Branch has a leading role to play in supporting schools to make wise decisions about their programs. In a system of devolved responsibility, that support cannot proceed through prescription, nor is prescription appropriate if one believes that there is no "one best solution" to planning for a comprehensive and coherent curriculum; and that wise decisions can indeed be made at local level if schools are given opportunities to review and plan their own programs and to incorporate into their own planning and review the experiences of other schools throughout the State.

Already there are difficult questions for the Curriculum Frameworks Program. If they are to provide advice which helps school communities to take up the powerful ideas of Ministerial Paper No.6, and to work with thos ideas in planning and reviewing their programs, this will not be achieved by using the traditional model of a course of study or a policy manual. Attention must be given to "unpacking" the leading ideas of Ministerial Paper No.6, and to assisting schools to relate those ideas to their current programs and policies. School communities are invited through use of Curriculum Frameworks to take charge of these ideas, to establish a sense of ownership among the various groups involved, and to use processes of decision making which support these objectives.

Previously, in the Curriculum Branch, courses of study and policy guidelines were developed centrally, and then distributed to schools. There was a problem of ownership. School communities were seen as implementing ideas that had already been worked through. They acted only when decisions about school programs or a course of study had been made elsewhere. The Frameworks Program requires a commitment to school support and teacher development in ways which the Curriculum Branch has never before attempted.

There is also the expectation that the Frameworks Program will involve the preparation of centrally prepared

materials. How are these to be developed in ways which allow schools to make responsible decisions about whether to adopt these materials, or to adapt them to suit local needs, or to develop their own materials instead? Are centrally prepared curriculum materials compatible with the Government's declared policy that "devolution of curriculum development be extended and set within clear guidelines for planning at the school level"? (M.P.,2.1)

THE AREAS OF LEARNING

Ministerial Paper No.6 lists seven broad categories in which learning should be provided: Language and Mathematics; The World and Its People; Participation in Australian Society; Literature and the Arts; Personal Fulfilment; Technical Competence; Science, Technology and Environment. Thirty-two specific goals for learning are listed under these headings.(See Attachment B)

These headings are not intended to be new subject titles or timetable names for schools to adopt. They are a convenient and manageable way of grouping the thirty-two specific goals of learning listed in Ministerial Paper 6. The areas of learning themselves are intended as a kind of check-list against which schools should review their program, and schools may offer other items in addition to those listed.

Curriculum Frameworks are being developed under ten themes. Nine relate to broad areas of learning: The Arts, Commerce, English, Languages other than English, Mathematics, Personal Development, Practical Studies and Design, Science, and Social Education. The tenth Framework is to deal with School Curriculum and Organization.

These categories were developed prior to the appearance of Ministerial Paper No.6. Some, like Commerce, Mathematics, English, and Science, reflect major subject areas in the primary and post-primary school curriculum. Others like The Arts, Personal Development, and Social Education attempt to bring together within the Frameworks document subject areas which have tended to be treated as discrete units in the school program. The Arts Framework embraces art and craft, dance, drama, graphic communication, media education and music; the Personal Development Framework embraces health education, home economics, outdoor education, physical education, textiles and clothing, and traffic safety education; and Social Education includes history, geography, humanities, politics, social studies and social science. Schools are not being asked, for example, to abandon history, geography and social studies, and to offer a new subject called Social Education. The Social Education Framework, as do the other eight frameworks which relate to broad areas of learning, attempts to offer a perspective and a set of principles for schools to review their current

programs in history, geography, or social education, and to give greater coherence to the school experience of young people.

The selection of these ten categories as the basis for the Curriculum Frameworks Program was a matter of considerable soul-searching at the time when the present structure of the Curriculum Branch was established in 1982. It represented a compromise, a half-way house, between a fragmented, subject-based curriculum and a more comprehensive and cross-disciplinary approach soon to be endorsed by Ministerial Paper No.6.

To have moved too far away from current school practice, in my opinion, would have impaired the ability of the Frameworks Program to influence school practice. To have continued to advise schools across an array of separate subject areas, with each striving to maintain its patch of the school program, would have perpetuated an unfortunate fragmentation. The selection of the ten categories was based on a pragmatic decision. It was not derived from any theoretical or epistemological position about knowledge or learning. It was about the way most likely to influence current school practice.

Each of the Frameworks brings similar principles to the task of planning and reviewing a school program. Like Ministerial Paper No.6, Curriculum Frameworks are intended to challenge current practice, to provide a basis for critical examination and review, and to open up discussion of curriculum issues to groups which have not always been included such as parents and young people themselves.

Some of the key ideas which are shared among the individual Frameworks Statements are:

- curriculum planning should emphasize a continuity of experience for young people from Preparatory Year to Year 12
- each element of the school program should ensure access and success for all students
- teaching strategies need to be more coherently organized across subject areas
- learning should be integrated across particular subjects and relate to the experiences of young people beyond school
- theoretical study should be linked to practical learning.

These ideas are present also in the Framework for School Curriculum and Organization. It will assist schools in

developing processes for planning and reviewing school policy and curriculum programs on a broader level than the other nine Frameworks statements. It is intended especially for use by school councils and curriculum committees. Its advice will address the following issues in particular:

- a P-12 approach to curriculum planning
- a coherent approach to teaching and learning throughout the school program
- ensuring access and success
- assessment and reporting practices
- balance in the curriculum program.

DEVELOPMENTAL STRATEGIES

Each Curriculum Frameworks writing team relates directly to a group of curriculum committees which are part of the Curriculum Branch. There are more than fifty curriculum committees representing school interests, primary and post-primary, in all major areas of the curriculum including inter-disciplinary studies. The curriculum committees, which meet for half a day each week, monitor the development of the curriculum frameworks, even though they are not usually in a position to provide major written input. Their role as a constant source of monitoring and advice is a key feature of the Frameworks project.

Each Curriculum Frameworks writing team relates to a corresponding group of advisors in at least two of the twelve regions through which the Ministry of Education operates. These regional groups consist of networks of schools, consultants, local curriculum committees. These Centre-Regional relations embrace not only the development of the core document, but are concerned also with identifying exemplary school practice and in ensuring that exemplary materials are developed from school practice.

Frameworks writing teams have connections with tertiary education, including teacher education. They are involved also in consultations with non-educational groups in the community. They are also making use of selected schools in the non-Government sector. The organizational arrangements from the Curriculum Frameworks Program are shown in Attachment C.

The consultative processes implicit in the Frameworks project, and the leading roles taken by schools in the development of materials and policies, are seen as vital professional development activities. A significant outcome of the project in 1986 will be that teachers and school communities will be more informed and more confident in their educational planning and practice.

By the end of 1986, Frameworks writing teams will prepare statements in three major sections:

(a) Rationale and policy, setting out the nature, purpose and scope of the area of study.

(b) Specific procedures for planning and reviewing of school programs, including recommended structure(s) for a program, assessment procedures, teaching strategies which support the objectives of the program, selection of content and related matters.

(c) Detailed explanations for these recommendations. These will be based on the rationale and policy statements, principles of learning, understandings of human growth and development, and the nature of the field of learning. Frameworks will include factors to be considered in planning, and processes which might be used.

Frameworks will be supported by other material, to be developed over time, including -

- exemplary activities;
- sample courses and suggestions for adapting and modifying these to meet local circumstances;
- suggestions for getting started;
- resources and facilities; and
- safety regulations.

COHERENCE AND CO-ORDINATION

Ministerial Paper No.6 requires that "schools should provide a coherent program which emphasises connections between areas of learning" (11.1). The gap between rhetoric and practice advice is unbridged in Ministerial Paper No.6. The Curriculum Frameworks Program has to deal with the problem at two levels:

(a) How are ten separate Frameworks statements themselves to present a coherent educational position?

(b) How are the Frameworks materials to assist schools to work towards this same goal in their own policy and practice?

The Co-ordination of Content Task Force has been formed to address the question of coherence in the Frameworks. Its task is to develop strategies which will achieve across the ten core documents:

- a coherent educational position - based on Ministerial Paper 6, the Issues Papers, and recent educational research, and other Branch projects.

- a consistent approach to teaching and learning taking account of advice from School Curriculum and Organization Frameworks, and by Issues Papers, and other projects which the Curriculum Branch will undertake in 1986.

- emphasis on shared educational goals across subject areas rather than making a case for specific subjects, with linkage across curriculum areas, as appropriate, based on the 32 goals of Ministerial Paper 6, the work of the inter-disciplinary committees and Special Programs Section, and links that already exist between curriculum areas.

- complete coverage of Ministerial Paper 6 - including the guaranteed learning areas and learning experiences; access and success; relationships between learning theory, practice and context; and between in-school and out-of-school experiences.

- coherence in presentation - this will be achieved through formatting, editing, etc. This function will be shared with the Information and Publications Task Force.

A far more complex task for Curriculum Frameworks is to provide advice to schools in achieving balance and coherence in their own programs. This advice will need to consider a school's total program offerings and the provision of learning experiences for individual students at a particular stage. It will need to give attention to "horizontal balance" and coherence at any one stage of; and to "vertical coherence" over time. "Horizontal balance" and coherence requires that school communities consider

- the amount of attention and time given to each area of the school program

- how school experiences are selected and organized so that what is learned has relevance and meaning to students

- how to include a variety of ways of learning and to provide opportunities for young people to practise and extend a range of skills

- how to reinforce the development of understanding, skills and attitudes across areas of learning, while unintended overlap, or mismatch of objectives between areas of learning is avoided.

These issues are being addressed comprehensively by the School Curriculum and Organization Framework. The advice being offered and the processes being developed to assist schools are exemplified in the project currently undertaken by Victoria College "Making it all hang together : developing a more balanced and coherent curriculum". This project is reported on elsewhere in the symposium.

UNRESOLVED ISSUES AND DIFFICULTIES

There is a danger that the Frameworks statements will not move far enough away from the discipline-based structure in which they originated. The danger is that they will leave unchallenged "old" forms of knowledge, and the pedagogical practices and institutional structures which supported them.

If Curriculum Frameworks are to assist school communities to adapt and use the policies of Ministerial Paper No.6, they will need to give explicit recognition to the forms of knowledge and school experience so clearly endorsed by the Ministerial Paper. These areas of knowledge and experience include: environmental education; understanding the economic, social and cultural impact of science and technology; study of the nature and organization of work since the Industrial Revolution and the likely impact of current changes in technology on the structure of the work force; as well as establishing a sustaining system of beliefs and values. These and other elements of a comprehensive education, as defined by the policies of Ministerial Paper No.6, are in danger of losing out unless Curriculum Frameworks can effect a transformation of the discipline-oriented context in which they were founded.

Curriculum Frameworks will attempt to achieve this through co-ordinated advice across the ten documents. They may be more effective in influencing school practice through the provision of sample programs which exemplify alternative ways of implementing the policies of Ministerial Paper No.6. These illustrative materials are intended to cut across traditional subject areas. It would be foolish to claim that projects, such as an Integrated Curriculum in the Primary School, and other exemplar materials will solve the problem of curriculum fragmentation, and an over-valuing of academic learning. However, these materials are based, in many instances, on actual school practice, and are therefore able to legitimate and confirm what is already being attempted in many schools, and challenge other schools to investigate ways of providing a more comprehensive and coherent school experience for young people.

Uncertainty still exists about the extent of, and likely continuation of financial resources to support the

Curriculum Frameworks project. At the end of 1985, the Curriculum Branch lost forty positions as a direct consequence of budget restrictions at Government level. There has been no ongoing financial commitment to the project. It is hoped that the project will continue in 1987 within available resources. However, with the prospect of another restructuring of the Ministry of Education, the Curriculum Branch is once again vulnerable to change, to financial restriction, and to a possible re-ordering of its priorities in response to new political considerations. These conditions are not conducive to supporting a project which needs a long term development strategy of at least five years.

One particular threat is that the Curriculum Frameworks project will lack adequate funds for teacher development and school support. This is contrary to the spirit of the Ministerial Papers. Yet, the Ministerial Papers were not sufficiently clear on the kinds of support which school communities need in order to sustain a significantly devolved process of curriculum planning at the local level. If the implications of the Ministerial papers for school support and teacher development had been elaborated, the Government might have been better able to resist pressures to cut-back curriculum support services.

CONCLUSION

Of all the demands placed upon a Government for school improvement - through its school building program, recruitment and training of teachers, management of personnel, provision of resources - curriculum support is the most difficult to come to terms with. Ministerial Paper No.6 contains enlightened notions about participatory curriculum planning, developing a balanced and coherent school program, providing a rich and varied experience for young people, utilizing the educational potential of new technology, and responding to a rapidly changing social order influenced by changing patterns of work and leisure. These are now standard phrases in the rhetoric of current policy making for education in Victoria.

Regrettably many educational policy makers and planners remain fixated by the rhetoric itself, hoping that its images will find a place in the life of schools. A far more demanding and rigorous task is to commit resources to assist all schools, not only the willing and innovative, to review and restructure their programs. Without such a commitment, the school experiences of many young people are unlikely to be transformed. In their own experience of schooling, they will come quickly to understand the mismatch between educational rhetoric and practice.

A SUMMARY OF MINISTERIAL PAPER 6, 'CURRICULUM PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT IN VICTORIA'

(from Victoria College, Rusden)

TEN KEY THEMES

1. SCHOOLING FOR LIVING

The task of schools is to provide a general education which will equip young people to

- participate effectively in the life of a multicultural, democratic society
- undertake worthwhile work
- play an active role in the processes through which our society is regulated and improved

2. SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

Responsibility for curriculum decisions is shared between

- the Government and its central administrators who provide guidelines and resources for schools
- the School Council which determines the general educational policies of the school
- the total school community whom the Council is to involve in collaborative decision-making processes
- the teaching staff who are to translate the policies into practical programs and activities

3. DEMOCRATIC DECISION-MAKING

Schools should ensure their own processes are democratic by

- involving teaching staff, parents, students and other relevant stakeholders in discussion and planning of the educational program
- providing the necessary information and assistance for the members of their communities to be able to contribute effectively to decision-making

4. ACCESS FOR ALL

Schools should enable all students to gain maximum benefit from their schooling by

- providing learning experiences suited to the needs, backgrounds, experiences and interests of all students
- maintaining participation in each area of learning
- avoiding arbitrary or indirect exclusion from the school or from particular learning opportunities

5. SUCCESS FOR ALL

Schools should enable all students to succeed in achieving worthwhile outcomes by

- acknowledging the variety of backgrounds, talents, interests and learning characteristics of students
- adopting a positive view of students' learning potential and recognising that success builds upon success
- providing a caring, supportive environment and a clear sense of direction for students

6. ASSESSMENT WHICH SUPPORTS LEARNING

Schools should employ assessment practices that provide an incentive to all students by

- basing assessment on success in reaching achievable goals
- de-emphasising comparisons between students
- focusing reporting on what students have achieved

7. A POSITIVE VIEW OF LEARNING

Schools should assist students to develop a sense of themselves as learners by enabling them to

- enjoy learning and gain satisfaction and confidence from their developing abilities
- make and act on responsible decisions about their own learning
- develop interests and activities which extend beyond school

8. VARIETY IN LEARNING

Students should be given opportunities of learning in a variety of ways including:

- personal experience with a range of modes of enquiry
- instruction which provides experience with a range of media for understanding and communication
- situations and settings both inside and outside the school
- practice in a range of skills relating to collecting, interpreting and acting upon information

9. RELATING LEARNING TO ACTION

Students should be helped to see learning as relevant and practical through opportunities to

- experience the interaction between theory and practice
- relate what they learn at school to what they do and learn outside school
- develop strategies for solving problems
- cooperate with others in achieving socially desirable outcomes

10. KEY AREAS OF LEARNING

In selecting content from the large range that is available schools should adopt criteria of relevance and significance and should ensure that the following broad areas of learning are encompassed for all:

- language and mathematics
- participation in Australian society
- personal fulfilment
- science, technology and the environment
- the world and its people
- literature and the arts
- technical competence

SOME IMPLICATIONS

1.
- allow for active student participation
- provide a general education in an appropriate form for each student

2.
- inform the school community of guidelines issued
- involve all parties in developing school policies
- provide ways for people to develop understanding and skills for effective participation

3.
- provide, where necessary interpreting facilities
- extend involvement as widely as feasible
- establish mechanisms for student participation and learning activities to develop appropriate skills

4.
- minimise arbitrary prerequisites for entry to particular studies
- ensure that real choices are available
- ensure that all learning areas cater for the full range of students needs
- examine the assumptions underlying present organisational and teaching arrangements

5.
- foster development of expectations of "success for all"
- set clear and achievable goals and learning tasks for each student
- establish structures which encourage strong interpersonal relationships and understanding between teachers and students

6.
- develop an evaluation policy
- develop clear and appropriate goals
- establish appropriate assessment, reporting and conferencing procedures
- recognise achievement in a wide range of activities

7.
- develop positive attitudes to learning
- provide experiences with clear post/ex school application

8.
- encourage use of different modes of learning
- encourage use of variety of settings for learning
- establish worthwhile school based/student devised projects

9.
- make the curriculum overtly relevant to life
- develop cooperative activities with local organisations
- make use of the network of contacts available through parents

10.
- ensure that all students have access to all areas of learning

The selection made will vary from school to school and to some extent from student to student, but all young people should experience the following comprehensive range of studies and activities.

11.3 Each school council should ensure that its program enables students progressively to:

language and mathematics

- listen and talk appropriately in a variety of situations and to read and write effectively in standard English as it is used in Australia;
- acquire proficiency in another language used in the Australian community;
- understand and apply the basic concepts of number, quantity and space and to understand logical and quantitative relationships and patterns; and
- employ mathematical concepts and processes in a variety of situations including those in the world outside school;

the world and its people

- develop an awareness of the international community and an informed commitment to strengthening Australia's role in it;
- understand the interdependence of different countries, peoples and economies; the inequalities between developing and developed countries and the factors underlying these inequalities;
- understand the threat to the future well-being of the world of such factors as the misuse of resources and stockpiling of armaments; and
- understand the relationship between physical environment, culture and society;

participation in Australian society

- understand the nature of human societies, the forces within them and processes of social, economic and political change;
- participate in the democratic processes through which our society regulates its activities and changes its institutions and laws;

• understand the history of Australia and appreciate the place of Aboriginal culture in that history;

• understand the influence of gender, race, ethnicity, class and culture on contemporary Australian society;

• find common ground with those whose lives and experiences differ from their own;

• respect the rights of others to hold different points of view and to maintain their own belief and value systems; and

• develop a critical understanding of the role of the media in society;

literature and the arts

• develop an appreciation of the visual and performing arts and literature in various forms and cultures and be directly involved in a range of practical arts activities;

• be familiar with the work of writers, composers and artists in our own and other cultures and eras;

• use the arts for self expression, learning and enjoyment; and

• develop an artistic awareness of their world and an understanding of the social role of the arts;

personal fulfilment

• establish a sustaining system of personal beliefs and values;

• engage in activities that foster physical development and understand the workings of the human body and the social forces that shape personal health and well-being; and

• develop confidence in their individual identity and in their membership of the various groups to which they belong;

technical competence

• work with tools and materials on practical tasks leading to an understanding both of the principles behind their use and of their potential applications;

• understand mechanical principles and their application;

• use, maintain and repair familiar tools, machines and appliances;

• participate in developing and making functional and non-functional objects and understand the processes of design and construction of their application in society; and

• develop competence with computers and information technology and understand their social effects, and appropriate those aspects of this technology which contribute to learning;

science, technology and the environment

• solve practical problems by applying scientific knowledge, methods and skills;

• understand natural phenomena and the concepts and principles which scientists have used to describe them;

• understand the relationship between science and its economic, political and cultural contexts;

• be aware of the applications of science and technology, of their social and environmental impact, and of the responsibilities which are associated with having the power to alter environments; and

• experience and understand the variety of environments in which we live, the need to maintain them responsibly and to evaluate the uses to which they are put.

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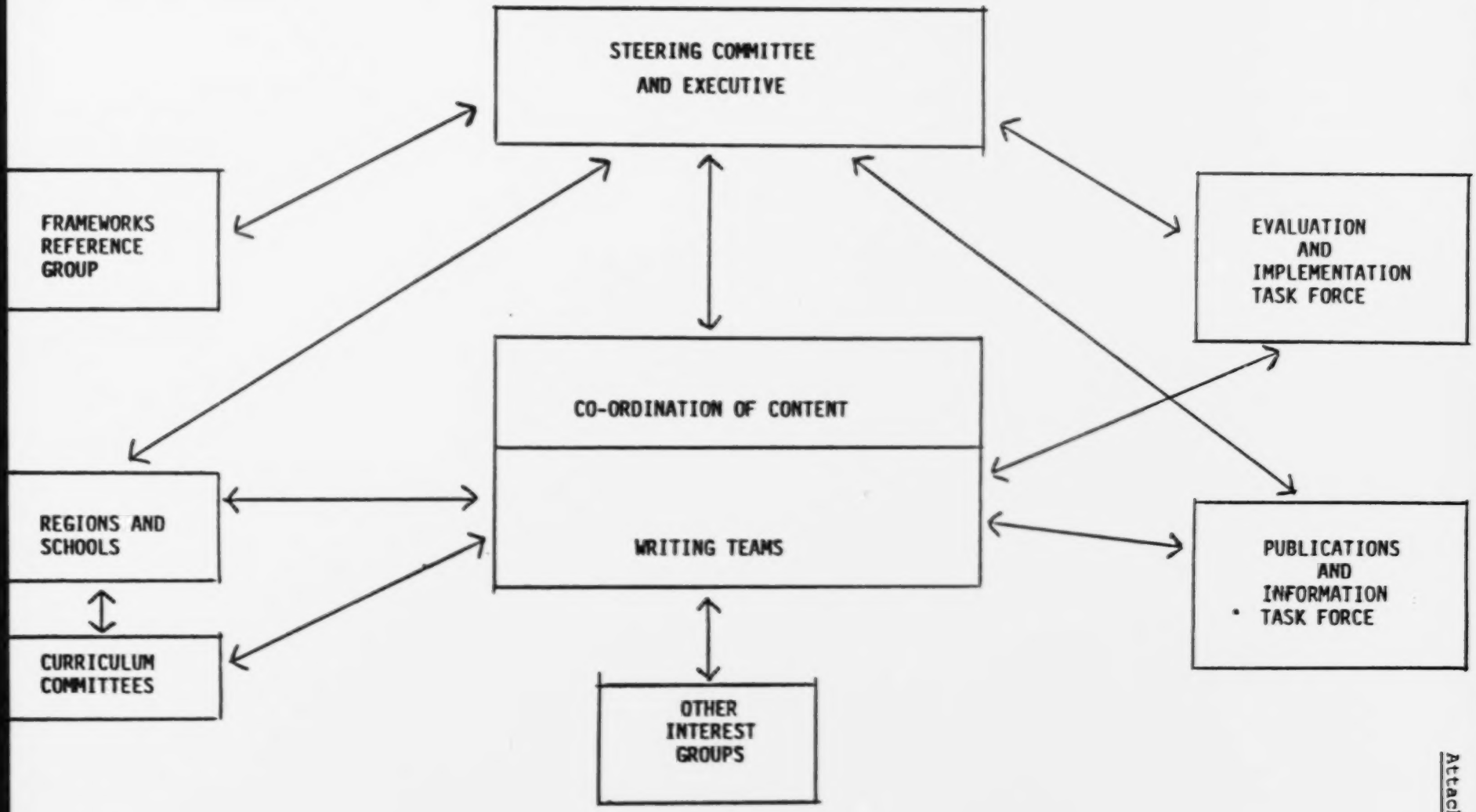

Attachment C 28.

COLLABORATIVE DECISION-MAKING IN LOCAL DEVELOPMENT OF SCHOOL POLICY AND PRACTICES

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Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the
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COLLABORATIVE DECISION-MAKING IN LOCAL DEVELOPMENT OF SCHOOL POLICY AND PRACTICES

DEFINITION OF TERMS:

Collaborative decision-making refers to the process by which parents, teachers, students, principals, administrators and others closely involved in the work of education will reach agreement on educational policy and practice. While participation in decision making in Victoria operates at the school, regional and State level(s) this paper will focus on the way in which local school communities employ collaborative decision-making to determine the general educational policy of the school within the guidelines issued by the Minister of Education.

BACKGROUND:

For the first half of the twentieth century a centralised state bureaucracy controlled the delivery of all facets of education, and teachers, parents and communities were remote from decision making and powerless to bring about change.

Within local schools decisions about educational policy and practice were seen as the preserve of the principal and teachers, parents were involved predominantly in fund raising, minor maintenance and teacher-aide type activities.

In the 1960's there were significant efforts to increase curriculum offerings but this usually took the form of centrally directed, but not mandatory curriculum development initiatives. It became obvious that teachers did not respond well to centrally developed curricula, claiming they were often not relevant to the needs of their school communities; too complex to understand; requiring excessive time and commitment; inadequately resourced; and not understood or accepted by parents who saw little need to alter content and practices that had served them well. Nevertheless the policy of devolution of decision making supported strongly by the teacher unions, hastened the advent of school based curriculum development.

This sometimes resulted in individual teachers, again without any parent or community input, making relatively autonomous curriculum decisions. Some schools experienced difficulty with the time, expertise or resources needed to adequately develop coherent, long term or balanced educational programs.

In the 1970's growing emphasis began to be placed on increased decision making at the school level and while the early years of the decade were characterised by the continued dominance of educational professionals in all decision making, by the late seventies acknowledgement of the role that parents might play was evident. The new "partnership theory" argued that parents, teachers, students - the home and the school - have a common interest in promoting the educational development of students.

Beare (1974) wrote

> "It is not idly, therefore, that I as an educator, reiterate: we want parents to come up to the school; we want parents to discuss education with the teachers; we want to discuss ways in which home and school can keep in step with each other and we want to find ways to involve parents in the government, policy making and educational program of the school."

While for some time, parent involvement was variously ignored, resisted or operated at the level of mere tokenism, it gained momentum as the community began to expect that school processes should reflect the processes of a democratic society and in this the foundations for genuine participation in collaboration between parents, teachers, students and administrators were laid. Alongside this was the growing evidence of the importance of home-school harmony in effecting academic and social development of children.

CURRENT GOVERNMENT POLICY:

There was then a receptive and ready climate for the fundamental changes espoused in the Ministerial Papers, the major principles of which were:

- genuine devolution of authority and responsibility to the school community
- democratic and collaborative decision making
- a responsive bureaucracy.... to service and assist schools and
- action by Government to provide positive discrimination for the disadvantaged.

Collaborative decision making was to be the process by which local schools would examine their own educational policies, develop their own curriculum objectives and organisational policies and decide on the use of resources. The membership of the new School Councils are such as to ensure full and active participation of parents and community. In the case of primary schools (years P - 6) elected staff representatives cannot constitute more that one half of the total membership and on the Councils for post-primary schools (years 7 - 12) elected staff are restricted to no more than one-third of the total membership. (See Attachments A and B)

Reflected in legislation then, was the Governments' firm resolve to have the power for curriculum decision making in the hands of democratically elected School Councils which by their very composition and responsibilities would ensure dialogue between education professionals and the elected parent and community representatives.

It is important to note two restrictions on the decision making of those local school bodies. First a council cannot go against the broad framework of Government education policy. For example, a council could not make decisions which were opposed to multiculturalism, non-sexist education, equality of opportunity and so on. Nor may a council make decisions about the ways in which teaching staff choose the educational means to operationalise council policy. But on the other hand Principals and staff have a clear responsibility to report on, explain and advocate their educational approaches to their communities. In this way professional autonomy and client confidence and support can be reconciled.

COLLABORATIVE DECISION MAKING AT WORK:

One of the major areas where collaborative decision making has been focused, is the development of written school policy documents. Clearly, there will always be considerable debate about the direction in which a school might go, but the task of deciding the goals of a school and the ways they will be realised, is absolutely central at the local school level.

Encouraging parent participation in school life and decision making is, of course, not simple and it is important to accept that, in a community comprising people with differing social, education, cultural and language backgrounds, time and training are important elements. Teacher defensiveness is another potential problem in such decision making. Many teachers view parental involvement with uncertainty and these attitudes will not change quickly.

Several strategies appear to enhance the involvement of parents in collaborative decision making. They include:

(i) working in small groups rather than whole school meetings

(ii) organising meetings at times suitable for parents

(iii) providing resources in the form of child care, language support, information well in advance of decision making

(iv) demystification of educational jargon which precludes lay participation

(v) focusing on parent and community opinions

(vi) providing for social interactions which break down role barriers, and

(vii) having clearly articulated processes by which decisions will be made and conflicts resolved.

In the past two years the new school councils have demonstrated that parents and the community are interested in education, can contribute equally with professionals in policy development and both groups can break down the barriers that stood for so long between the providers of schooling and their clients. Many encouraging articles have been published which outline in an anecdotal way the progress that is being made. Most schools are well on the way to producing policy statements on such aspects as:

specific subject curricula
computer usage
pastoral care
student discipline
equality of opportunity
sexually inclusive curricula
integration of disabled students and
school community usage of resources.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES: When collaborative decision making works well in a school we see the following strengths and characteristics:

- the development of relevent, responsive, local school curriculum
- policies and practices which are the result of dialogue, respect for others' views and finally consensus on an agreed plan
- greater respect between teachers, parents and students
- greater commitment by teachers and parents who enjoy being partners in a cooperative enterprise
- harmony and productiveness in the delivery of the school program
- time having been set aside to establish clear goals and strategies for achieving them
- major educational policy decisions being made by the School Council with the principal and staff being an integral part of the process
- strong channels of communication between all participants.

When it is not working well we usually find one, some or all of the following features present:

- that either the parent or the teacher group, or both, are not yet committed to the idea and retain defensive postures
- that insufficient time has been given to explaining to teachers and parents, what is expected, where responsibilities lie and how collaborative decision making can be made to work
- efforts in collaboration directed into inappropriate areas of decision-making
- training needed for elected staff and parents in collaborative decision making processes is not available

- that there is insufficient interest by staff who are not committed to the community in which they teach
- that parents, because of language, cultural barriers or pressure of home and work, do not feel able to participate
- there is an unnecessary proliferation of committees
- meeting procedures and decision making processes are ineffective
- the flow of information between the various parties is inadequate either in quantity or quality
- there are logistical problems, especially in country areas, which require substantial time commitments by representatives
- language/cultural barriers which may hamper full participation of a significant section of a parent body.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS:

There needs to be substantial and continued support for all participants in refining their skills of collaboration, conflict resolution, consensus seeking and decision making. There must also be support given to both teachers and parents for the additional workload and responsibilities they now have to assume. In the more senior grade levels students, too, need training in methods of communication that facilitate these school-community developments.

The problems of community involvement in school decision making are surmountable and the benefits where it is working well are undeniable.

Attachment A

Extract from Ministerial Paper No. 4
School Councils p.9

MEMBERSHIP

The Government's intention is that the **proportion** of membership of the reconstituted councils will be as follows.

(*a*) Parents (including representatives of parents' clubs) shall constitute **no less than** —
- half of a primary school council; and
- one-third of a postprimary school council.

(*b*) Staff shall constitute **no more than** —
- half of a primary school council; and
- one-third of a postprimary school council. (Members of staff with children at the school at which they teach shall only be eligible for election through this category.)

(*c*) There shall be adequate student representation in postprimary schools in relation to school size and structure.

(*d*) Up to one-fifth of the total membership may be coopted by the elected council, to represent wider community interests.

(*e*) The principal shall be a voting member of the council and, for the purposes of cooption, shall be considered as an elected member.

IMPLEMENTATION

1. Scope for Local Adaptation of Policy

In keeping with its general policy of collaborative development of policy the Government wishes to encourage school councils to propose changes in their own constitutions and to consider local needs in reforming them.

The size of the council and the exact make-up of its membership within the Government's membership requirements is a matter for local decision. Should parent representation be the exact minimum specified or more? What provision will be made for official school parent organisations? Will the arrangements ensure representation of all sectors of the school community and a reasonable balance of the sexes?

What subgroups of teachers and postprimary students will be represented and how will their representatives be chosen?

What steps will be taken to educate students to the representative process?

How will representative elections be arranged to provide for stability and continuity of council direction to school affairs?

Each school's council is invited to consult with all groups involved to redraft its constitution in a way which, while conforming to the Government's education policy and membership requirements, reflects the needs of its local community.

The Government will respond to individual suggestions on these matters.

Attachment B

(i) An Example of the Membership of an Elementary School Council

8 elected parents

2 elected parent association representatives

9 teachers elected by staff

1 principal

1 local municipal council representative

up to 3 co-opted members with particular expertise appointed for 1 year only.

(ii) An Example of the Membership of a Secondary School

8 elected parents

6 teachers elected by staff

1 principal

4 students

up to 3 co-opted members with particular expertise appointed for 1 year only

IDENTIFYING PROCESSES FOR COHERENT CURRICULUM PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION AT A SCHOOL LEVEL: THE MINISTERIAL PAPER NO. 6 AND SCHOOLS PROJECT

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Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the
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San Francisco, April, 1986

IDENTIFYING PROCESSES FOR COHERENT CURRICULUM PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION AT A SCHOOL LEVEL

PURPOSE

In mid-1985 Victoria College's Centre for Studies in the Curriculum was commissioned by those responsible for the MP6 implementation process to undertake the Ministerial Paper No. 6 and Schools Project. The project team comprises the four Victoria College representatives participating in this symposium.

The central purpose of the project is the development of strategies and materials which can be used by individual schools as they seek to plan and implement curriculum which is consistent with the guidelines in Ministerial Paper 6. In particular, the project aims to develop and disseminate effective processes for improving the balance and coherence of the curriculum for the student, both horizontally across subject areas, and vertically across year levels within the context of the teaching and learning principles and decision-making processes expressed in the Ministerial Paper (MP6). This project is linked to the development of the Curriculum Frameworks currently being developed within the Ministry of Education, and to other aspects of the Ministerial Paper 6 implementation process.

In addition, an important aspect of the project is the modelling of a collaborative approach to change which is a key element in the ministerial paper.

INTENDED OUTCOMES

The main product of the project is to be a resource kit which will assist schools to examine, evaluate and improve their curriculum offerings and processes.

In developing the kit the following have been key considerations. Specifically, the kit must

(a) be reasonably simple to access and use

(b) meet the needs of various levels, sizes and types of schools

(c) be accompanied by carefully planned and adequately resourced support processes to facilitate adoption and implementation of the strategies and processes included.

Whilst the kit is presently in a variety of schools for trialling purposes and is yet to be further refined, it is intended that it comprise the following six parts:

1. An outline of the aims of MP6, and those of the kit - in helping develop curriculum which is balanced and coherent.

2. A guide to the contents of the kit and some suggestions about how it might be used.

3. An index listing 33 processes and conditions which are ways of supporting curriculum balance and coherence. Grouped under five major headings, the index provides a basis for selection by a school of appropriate processes, strategies and materials consistent with perceived needs and concerns. (See Attachment 1)

4. A resource kit in which each of the thirty-three processes and conditions in the index is detailed separately with relevant key questions, strategies, pitfalls and illustrations included. An example of one of these is included in Attachment 2. The kit will thus comprise a box of cards which may be accessed according to what the school perceives to be its present curriculum needs and concerns.

5. An alternative index of programs, activities and strategies already developed by schools which support a balanced, and coherent curriculum. This index will be cross-referenced with the resources kit and provides another route into that kit. (See 4 above)

6. Illustrations and references providing detailed working examples of how other teachers in Victorian schools have successfully implemented these programs, activities and strategies.

DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES

Stage 1: Initial Contacts with Schools

Four schools are centrally involved in the project - two primary (elementary) and two post-primary schools. The schools were nominated by the Ministry of Education.

Initial contacts were made with representatives from each school at a workshop concerned with aspects of classroom management led by Jane Stallings.

Subsequently, the project team made an initial visit to each school. These visits served to continue the process of building trust between the team and staff, students and parents in each school. They also provided an opportunity to gather preliminary information about the schools and the curriculum processes and strategies being employed which were consistent with MP6. Available school documentation (e.g. policy statements) and discussions with teachers and parents were principle sources of data.

Stage 2: In-Depth Visits

Analysis of documents, further analysis of the MP6 guidelines, and reflection upon discussions in the schools provided the basis for detailed discussions with staff during the one to two days which were spent in each school. A representative cross-section of staff as well as students and parents were interviewed.

Stage 3: Development of Draft Strategies and Materials

The next stage was the development of strategies and materials based upon those processes and conditions which appear to contribute to curriculum balance and coherence and which were identified during Stage 2 of the project. The project team worked through several drafts to produce a "trial version" of the resource kit.

Stage 4: Formative Evaluation of Draft Materials

This present stage includes further visits, consultations and negotiations with the schools to refine and modify the strategies and materials developed thus far. To facilitate this process, the materials have been forwarded to a range of other schools and individuals so that a broad sampling of opinion, feedback and further suggestions is obtained.

Stage 5: Revision, Production, Dissemination and Implementation

The final stages of the project will include:

(a) the revision of the materials in the light of the information gathered in the previous stage

(b) the handing on of the prototype kit to the Ministry for publication and distribution

(c) the planning of dissemination and implementation processes. This will include presentation of materials at a State wide curriculum conference in May.

REFLECTIONS

It is now widely recognised that the task of securing change in school policies and practices is a complex one, and one for which the fruits of the endeavour often are slow to be realised. This project is still in progress and its "fruits" are yet to appear. Nevertheless, the project thus far has yielded valuable insights into the process of curriculum change and the role to be played in that process by 'outsiders', particularly tertiary institutions.

(1) The strong positive support for the project and high level of interest amongst staff, students and parents indicates a concern to be involved and, secondly and more subtly perhaps, an eagerness to find out how other schools tackle common issues in curriculum. A valuable aspect of the project has been the opportunity it has afforded staff to visit other schools and gain insights still not commonly available to teachers in what Ryan calls the second most private social activity (Joyce, 1981) - that of teaching.

This was made possible by the provision of funds in the project for the hiring of substitute teachers to enable staff to spend time with the project team and to make visits to other participating schools. A project of this kind can thus play an important role in breaking down the isolation of teachers from one another.

(2) The support given to the project team, and the experience gained in the project, support the importance of collaboration and negotiation with schools in the process of curriculum change. Whilst there were differences in what schools expected of the project and of the team the high level of support is taken to indicate the value schools attach to being involved. This is not least because this process implicitly attaches value to the perspectives of teachers, students and parents and gives recognition to their ability to reflect critically upon their role in the process of change. This, in turn, is likely to nurture a commitment to further improvement of curriculum (Taylor, 1980; Smyth, 1981). It is generally recognised that individuals are more often committed to projects in which they have a particular involvement (Tisher, 1977; Robson, 1984).

(3) The project yields some insights into the role played by tertiary institutions in assisting schools in the implementation of State policy initiatives. The role played by 'outsiders' in the process of change is necessarily a delicate one. The literature contains many examples of curriculum projects which have failed, in part at least because of the promethean approach to change typically characterised by an "invasion of experts" into schools carrying with them practices and strategies developed without adequate reference to context or school needs and predicated on the assumption that change comes from such external provision. There are, therefore clear dangers for those who would attempt to assist in the process of change as 'outsiders'.

The role of 'outsider' also has, however, its positive aspects. As staff of a tertiary institution, the members of the project team have been able to glean information concerning curriculum processes which, as staff members in the school, they might not have so easily obtained. In addition, their position allows them to bring a broader perspective to bear and to gather and disseminate information in ways which cannot be as easily accomplished by staff in schools.

(4) Finally, although the project was initiated and funded by the Ministry of Education, and whilst the team has had regular consultations with senior Ministry personnel, it has operated independently. The team has thus been able to bring a different perspective to bear on the process of securing change.

In summary, the collaborative approach to change adopted in this project is consistent with that enshrined in MP6 and therefore the team has been able to adopt the role of 'critical friend' and provide a means by which existing sound curriculum strategies and processes might be documented and additional ones developed in ways which promote ownership of any change. It is recognised that the targetted schools were nominated by the Ministry, however a broader range of schools has been involved in Stage three of the project so that the final product/kit might contain strategies and materials more likely to be used by schools.

Draft 2/86

MINISTERIAL PAPER NO. 6 AND SCHOOLS PROJECT

MAKING IT ALL HANG TOGETHER :

DEVELOPING A MORE BALANCED AND COHERENT CURRICULUM

PROGRESSIVE LISTING OF PROCESSES AND CONDITIONS

The list below summarises processes and conditions seen to be relevant to the development and maintenance of balanced and coherent curricula. The list is subject to ongoing revision both in its content and its organisation.

It has been tentatively divided into sections to aid its use. Because the sections inevitably overlap there is cross referencing of items between sections.

For each item a specification is being developed which seeks to

* describe the process or condition, establish its purpose/s and give examples
* provide guidelines as to how the process or condition can be developed and effectively implemented
* identify potential pitfalls or difficulties to be avoided

A Relating to Teachers

A1 Teacher placement

Deploying teachers to positions of "best fit":

* appropriate school
* appropriate placement within the school
* planned changes of placement within the school.

A2 Teacher induction and professional development

Processes that enable teachers to:

* quickly come to understand the program and their place in it
* make a continuing and skilled contribution to developing and maintaining curriculum balance and coherence.

A3 Teacher location

Office and staffroom arrangements which foster communication among teachers responsible for the program of particular students.

A4 Home group teacher

Developing the role of the home group teacher as link person and course advisor to include:

* thorough familiarity with the students' programs
* acting as a focus for fostering horizontal coherence
* responsibility for course advice and transmission of relevant information.

B Relating to Communication

B1 Small group meetings and specific focus working parties

Formal groups established for ongoing or short-term purposes relating to curriculum balance and coherence:

* learning area groups
* year level groups
* groups with common interest in or responsibility for particular students
* special purpose groups

B2 Staff/school community conferences

Opportunities arranged for extended consideration of and planning for curriculum balance and coherence.

Attachment 1 43.

B3 Cross-faculty staff involvement

* staff with expertise primarily in one curriculum area contributing a particular perspective to programs in another
* staff with expertise primarily in one curriculum area visiting meetings in another faculty to gain or exchange information and ideas.

B4 Collaborative decision-making processes (see E3)

B5 Staff-student consultation
Processes such as curriculum negotiation which assist in the identification of opportunities for integration or the likelihood of potential overlaps.

B6 Involvement of consultants

B7 Teacher location (see A3)

B8 Information dissemination processes
Procedures designed to assist rapid and effective transmission of information relevant to curriculum balance and coherence.

B9 Social Programs

C Relating to Curriculum and Organisation

C1 Some organizational forms relating to vertical coherence
* multi-age grouping of students for learning
* vertical modular grouping

C2 Some organizational forms relating to horizontal coherence
* multi-discipline teams

*thematic studies including community based projects
*curriculum based on "broad fields" learning areas

C3 Curriculum and assessment based on developmental schemes focussing on processes and learning outcomes (see D1)

C4 Cross-faculty staff involvement (see B3)

C5 Entry prerequisites for curriculum components
Establishment of prior learning experiences or achievements, where appropriate, which enable entry to particular programs.

C6 Accreditation of curriculum components within the school
Processes which ensure that programs are known, documented and approved as being suitable in the context of the total curriculum.

C7 Planning focusses on both processes and content
Development and use of curriculum documentation which identifies planned process learning as well as content.

C8 Collaborative decision making processes (see E3)

D Relating to Use and Management of Information

D1 Documentation of programs (see C6)

D2 Cumulative developmental records for students (see C3)
Records of student learning achievements which provide information as the student progresses through schooling.

D3 Information dissemination processes (see B8)

See also:- Evaluation - collection of appropriate information to help determine which areas or issues in the school should be addressed. (USING THE KIT : 1)

E Relating to Policy and Administration

E1 Existence of school policies which support balance and coherence
School policies are needed which support the principles involved, establish the structures within which they can operate, and require relevant tasks to be undertaken.

E2 Dynamic curriculum management
Strong curriculum leadership, provision of needed resources and appropriate professional development and support.

E3 Collaborative decision making
Students and parents assisting in identifying inadequate balance and coherence and contributing to planning for enhancing these aspects.

E4 Existence of system arrangements which support balance and coherence (see A1, A2, B8, C6, etc.).

B1 : SMALL GROUP MEETINGS AND WORKING PARTIES

The creation of formal groups for ongoing or short-term purposes provides one effective means of fostering communication between all "stake- holders". It also promotes the development of shared understandings relevant to curriculum balance, integration and coherence. Groups provide important opportunities for staff to become aware of the values, attitudes and skills being taught in other curriculum areas.

When using small groups or working parties to promote communication and contribution to curriculum development, consideration should be given to:

1] different types of groups appropriate to specific needs
2] strategies for effective operation
3] organisational or timetabling arrangements

GUIDELINES:

1] DIFFERENT TYPES OF GROUPS ARE APPROPRIATE TO DIFFERENT NEEDS

(a) Learning area groups made up of staff from related discipline/ subject areas. They meet regularly to develop subject matter and/or teaching strategies which promote coherence in the curriculum and minimise overlap.

(b) Year level groups - Teachers meet to examine/discuss/plan curriculum content and teaching strategies across the total curriculum at a particular year level.

(c) "Pastoral" groups meet to review and plan for the progress of particular students through the curriculum and monitor coherence in the curriculum. Such groups should include parents and students wherever appropriate (see A4 & B5).

(d) Special purpose groups can be established to develop teaching strategies which provide for curriculum integration.

KEY QUESTIONS

Does co-operative teaching and professional sharing of ideas occur between teachers of the same year level/curriculum or subject area?

What avenues exist for parent/student participation?

In what ways are groups used to examine student progress and monitor coherence in the curriculum?

2] **STRATEGIES ARE NEEDED WHICH PROMOTE EFFECTIVE OPERATION**

Groups can work most effectively where their membership, size, group dynamics and purpose are well planned, and where organisational arrangements are made to support their operation.

(a) Membership should be representative of all "stakeholders" - staff, students and parents, in light of the purpose of the group.

KEY QUESTIONS

Is parent or student participation expected or are they merely invited to participate?

Do existing structures/administrative arrangements (e.g. times) preclude parent/student participation?

Does the membership of the group allow participants to work well together, and to make full use of their abilities?

(b) The size of the group should be limited.

KEY QUESTION

Does group size allow for the maximum individual participation and contribution in time available for meetings?

(c) Group dynamics - Setting up a group does not guarantee that it will be effective or productive. Individual group members will continue to play particular roles or represent sectional interests until a degree of trust is developed within the group.

KEY QUESTIONS

Does the group include members with skills in facilitating group processes?

In what ways are group members encouraged to contribute openly to discussions?

How do groups make decisions about curriculum?

- by majority rule?
- by coalition rule?
- by mean rule?
- by individual rule?
- by executive/principal decision?

What expectations are held about group procedures? Is the meeting

- a friendly chat?
- a pooling of ignorance?
- a legalistic or legislative process focussing on crossing t's and dotting i's?
- a soap box?
- a forum for the sharing and discussion of well thought out ideas conducted with the goal of making a decision?

Consensus may be derived more quickly and efficiently where individuals present ideas as "position papers".

(d) The purpose/focus of the group is clear and procedures established for the follow-up and communication of decisions.

KEY QUESTIONS

Are decisions of the group ignored/subverted/over-ruled?

What channels exist to ensure group decisions are considered by the relevant committee?

3) ORGANISATIONAL OR TIMETABLING ARRANGEMENTS SHOULD SUPPORT EFFECTIVE FUNCTIONING OF GROUPS

Groups can only work effectively when all group members are able to fully participate. Administrative arrangements need to ensure this is possible.

KEY QUESTIONS

Are common periods of non-teaching time specifically allocated for group meetings?

Are meeting times planned at times when parents and/or students are available?

What arrangements exist to enable staff with related responsibilities to plan and communicate?

Is the venue for group meetings conducive to effective/productive group functioning e.g. lighting, furniture?

In what ways does the school administration facilitate (support) the effective functioning of groups or working parties? What more needs to be done?

PITFALLS

1. Individual concerns about one's own teaching competence may preclude frank and open disclosure of curriculum content/teaching strategies.

2. Attempts to establish fully representative membership of groups may be inappropriate or even counterproductive where it makes the group too large to be effective and/or where individuals are included without sufficient regard for "best fit" or likely contribution.

3. An individual's effectiveness in any one group may be limited by involvement in several groups.

4. An information monopoly can exist in groups and prevent honest communication because individuals do not wish to expose their lack of knowledge. This is particularly the case where groups include individuals with differing degrees of power.

5. A poorly functioning committee may achieve less than an efficient individual leader who has the respect of his/her staff.

Illustrations

Kingswood Primary School - year level teaching teams which plan the week by week program/teaching strategies during a common timetabled non-teaching hour.

Special School meetings - planning and goal-setting meetings for students with particular needs are often held. They involve the student, parents and all his/her teachers.

THE SCHOOL SUPPORT GROUP:

AN INNOVATION IN COLLEGE-BASED CONSULTANCY

John Atkinson

Victoria College - Rusden Campus
Victoria, Australia

Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the
American Educational Research Association,
San Francisco, April, 1986

THE SCHOOL SUPPORT GROUP: AN INNOVATION IN COLLEGE-BASED CONSULTANCY

In 1977 staff of the Department of Curriculum and Teaching of the then Rusden State College (now Victoria College - Rusden Campus) established an organisation called the Centre for Studies in the Curriculum. The Centre was conceived as a vehicle for channelling the involvement of College staff into curriculum research and development activities in a more coordinated and effective way than hitherto. Appendix 1 summarises the goals and policies of the Centre for Studies in the Curriculum and lists its main current and past projects.

CONTEXT

With the progressive publishing of the Ministerial Papers 1 - 6 by the State Minister of Education in 1983-4 and the concurrent enunciation of the Federal Government's Participation and Equity Program it became apparent that individual schools would need considerable support and assistance if the new policies were to be effectively implemented. It was also clear that restricted capacity for government spending on education would result in this need for support being inadequately met from State Department sources. Both a need and an opportunity therefore existed for the directing into this work of some of the considerable pool of relevant expertise in the College, provided feasible means of doing so could be found.

It should be emphasised at this point that in the straitened financial circumstances of the early 80's none had been harder hit than the Colleges - and particularly the amalgamation of four former colleges which had become the new Victoria College. There was therefore no surplus capacity within the College for taking on this support role with schools. Any attempt to do so would have to be both limited in scope and self-sustaining. In collaboration with the Chairman of a new Centre - the Centre for Public Policy Research and Development - within the College's Faculty of Business, key members of the Centre for Studies in the Curriculum conceived of the setting up of the School Support Group (SSG).

SERVICES

The School Support Group is a joint project of the two Centres: an agency for the provision of professional support and services to schools and other educational organisations or groups through the coordinated utilisation of the expertise and resources available within Victoria College. SSG offers professional development and consultancy services tailored to the needs of individual clients. By acting as a broker for the provision of such services it seeks to ensure that the most appropriate expertise is applied to each particular situation and that a high quality of service is maintained. While some College-based SSG activities are organised, the emphasis is on the provision of locally-based programs and services.

MARKETING

SSG services are marketed through VICTRACC Ltd., the College's research and consultancy company. A prospectus was developed to publicise the range of services available. This is available to potential clients who respond to promotion material forwarded through Ministry of Education regional mailings or promulgated in other ways. Fees for services are set at a realistic level which reflects the actual costs of providing the services. Staff may either be paid for SSG activities undertaken in excess of a normal workload or they may undertake SSG activities as part of their workload. In the latter case the staff member receives no additional payment, the funds generated being applied to supplementing the staffing of the department/s concerned so as to provide the capacity to undertake SSG contracts. An initial small seeding grant in 1984 from the College's Innovations Fund materially assisted the SSG's establishment.

ACTIVITIES

° Consultancy projects

The main consultancy activities undertaken during 1985 were:

(i) The carrying out of a student needs study and provision of follow-up consultancy assistance for the Participation and Equity Program Taskforce of Mansfield High School - a small rural school some 160 kilometres from Melbourne.

(ii) The planning and implementation of a program to improve classroom behaviour for McKillop College - a Catholic secondary school on the outskirts of Melbourne.

(iii) The development of a computer education program for Won Wron Primary School - a very small rural school about 240 kilometres from Melbourne.

(iv) An evaluation study relating to the mathematics program at Templestowe Park Primary School in the suburbs of Melbourne.

(v) A professional development program focussing on communication within the school community for Santa Maria College - a Catholic girls secondary school in an inner suburb.

(vi) Assistance with the carrying out of school community surveys for the Participation and Equity Program Taskforce at Mount Clear Technical High School in the provincial city of Ballarat.

(vii) Assistance to the school community of the suburban Alamein Primary School in seeking to plan for meeting the needs of its generally disadvantaged and declining school population.

In all these activities a major thrust has been the development of a close and cooperative working relationship with people - staff, parents and, in some cases, students - within the schools so that not only is there a sense of local ownership of the project, but those on-site have the opportunity of developing relevant skills. This approach is totally consistent with the principles expressed in the Ministerial Papers.

° Seminar series

In the first half of 1985 the School Support Group organised and hosted a series of six "School Management Seminars". These seminars, conducted on successive Wednesday evenings at the Toorak Campus, focussed on issues which had been identified as being current concerns of schools - most of them arising directly from the Ministerial Papers. Each seminar featured a small number of appropriate key-note speakers on the issue concerned, followed by illustrative case studies of good innovative practice. The latter were provided by the key actors themselves from schools which had been identified as having achieved significant progress in the particular facet of school activity which was the focus for that semimar. As well as being relevant and timely for participants, the seminars were a means of promoting the services available through the newly formed School Support Group.

° Publications

The School Support Group also produces a (now occasional) publication for schools - School Management.

BENEFITS

The establishment and operation of the School Support Group has had a number of benefits for both the College and the schools involved, as well as the mutual benefit of strengthening the links between teacher educators and the school systems.

° (a) Benefits for the College

(i)) Staff have been able to be involved "at the chalkface" in the exciting developments occurring in the schools: this is important to the image and credibility of the College as well as providing a rich source of experience which feeds back into College teaching.

(ii) Funds generated have in the main been used to effect modest additions to staffing thus extending and broadening the pool of expertise available to College students.

(iii) Staff locked into positions with little prospect of promotion in the current climate of negative growth in teacher education have the opportunity of new and stimulating experiences.

(iv) In some cases it has been appropriate to involve final year students in the projects, affording them valuable experience.

° (b) Benefits for the Schools

(i) Schools are able to gain access to the knowledge, skills and experience of College staff to assist them in current initiatives. In most cases the developments which have stemmed from SSG involvement have been markedly enhanced by that involvement.

(ii) Skills of teachers, parents and students are enhanced through working collaboratively with the consultant/s and can be applied to subsequent activities within the school.

(iii) The "independent view" provided by the College consultant has in some cases led to consideration of aspects which would otherwise have been by-passed.

(iv) SSG has been able to apply the most appropriate College resources to the particular project and to maintain quality control.

DIFFICULTIES It would be misleading to convey the impression that the School Support Group initiative has been "all roses". Some of the difficulties encountered include:

(i) the expectation of schools that consultancy services come free;

(ii) restrictions on use of funds received by schools under various grants e.g. the Participation and Equity Program;

(iii) finding the blocks of time within busy people's teaching schedules to devote to the consultancy work;

(iv) developing and maintaining an awareness of the availability of the service;

(v) issues of who owns materials used in, or resulting from, the particular project.

While the provision of professional development and consultancy services to schools and related organisations by College staff has been going on for a long time, the establishment of the School Support Group has enabled this function to be carried out in a more coordinated and professional manner which has undoubtedly been to the benefit of both the providers and consumers of the services.

Appendix 1

Victoria College

Ruskin Campus
662 Blackburn Road,
Clayton 3168
Victoria, Australia
Telephone: (03) 542 7444

Ref

centre for studies in the curriculum

Chairman: Mr J.M. Atkinson

The purpose of the Centre is to encourage the involvement of staff of Victoria College in advancing the study of curriculum and associated practices in educational and training agencies and to provide support for such involvement.

To attain this purpose the Centre initiates, encourages and supports

1. research into aspects of curriculum activity and thought;
2. development and publication of teaching and learning materials;
3. provision of consultative services in curriculum development and evaluation;
4. the participation of educational and training agencies in collaborative activities relevant to the purpose of the Centre;
5. the conducting of seminars and colloquia;
6. visits from scholars to enrich the work of the Centre and the College;
7. contact with institutions and groups having similar interests;
8. dissemination of innovative work in curriculum done by undergraduate and graduate students and staff of the institution.

Publications

The Centre has a policy of publishing the following materials from time to time:

- reports of research and evaluation studies
- occasional papers, including theoretical papers, case studies and discussion papers on various curriculum issues
- series of papers on particular topics
- curriculum materials for use at primary, secondary and tertiary level
- short stimulus papers containing curriculum ideas and suggestions for teachers.

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221 Burwood Highway
Burwood Vic. 3125
Telephone: (03) 285 3333

Prahran Campus
142 High Street
Prahran Vic. 3181
Telephone: (03) 529 7788

Ruskin Campus
662 Blackburn Road
Clayton Vic. 3168
Telephone: (03) 542 7444

Toorak Campus
336 Glenferrie Road
Malvern Vic. 3144
Telephone: (03) 285 3333

MAJOR PROJECTS AND PUBLICATIONS OF THE CENTRE FOR STUDIES IN THE CURRICULUM

MUNCH (Materials for the Understanding of Nutrition and Community Health)

Preparation of curriculum materials in nutrition and community health for students in primary and secondary schools (primary materials published by Victorian Dairy Industry Association, 1979; secondary materials completed and in publication: national distribution by CDC).

Co-ordinator: Geoff Trebilco Funding: Victorian Dairy Industry Authority

RAMP (Rusden Activity Mathematics Project)

Development of mathematics curriculum materials for school years seven and eight (available commercially).

Co-ordinator: Bruce Henry

RALPH (a project in Mathematics for Gifted Children)

Development of mathematics materials for gifted children. (Published 1980; available from the Centre.)

Co-ordinator: Bruce Henry

Q-CARDS (formerly HEARP: Home Economics Action Research Project)

Development of innovative starter cards for secondary school home ecnomics and related uses. (Published 1980; available from the Centre.)

Co-ordinator: Joan Walsh Funding support: Victorian In-service Education Committee

ATBEP (ASEP Talking Book Evaluation Project)

Evaluation of a talking book approach for use with ASEP materials by poor readers. (Completed 1978; report available from CDC.)

Co-ordinator: Geoff Beeson

EEC (Evaluation of 'Exploring Childhood')

Evaluation of the applicability of the 'Exploring Childhood' curriculum materials to Australian schools. (Completed 1981; report available from CDC.)

Co-ordinator: Noel Gough Funding: Curriculum Development Centre

PRIMARY-SECONDARY TRANSITION

Studies of transition from primary to secondary school and ways of facilitating educational continuity across the primary-secondary interface. (Report 'Aiding Transition from Primary to Secondary School' completed 1979; available from the Centre.)

Co-ordinator: John Atkinson

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RMEXT

Development of a curriculum package (course plus materials) in research methods in education for use on a correspondence or other individualised basis by those involved in TAFE. (Completed 1981.)

Co-ordinator: Geoff Beeson Funding: TAFE

MILSCUP (Middle Level Skills Catch-up Project)

Investigation of the applicability of some recent research findings to the problem of overcoming specific deficiencies in the knowledge background of students beginning TAFE courses. (Completed 1977; report available from the Centre.)

Co-ordinator: Geoff Beeson Funding: TAFE

IF (Inventing the Future)

Development of across-the-curriculum materials inviting students to speculate about the future. (In progress.)

Co-ordinator: Noel Gough

BLOODSTREAM (Blood Study Teacher Resources and Educational Activity Materials)

Development of a set of across-the-curriculum secondary school materials relating to blood and the work of the Blood Bank. (Completed 1983; in publication by the Blood Bank.)

Co-ordinator: John Atkinson Funding: Red Cross Blood Bank

THE PEOPLE OF AUSTRALIA

A national curriculum materials project on population studies being carried out in co-operation with the Department of Educational Technology, Toorak Campus for the Federal Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs. (In progress.)

Co-ordinators: John Atkinson, Alex Millar and the Population Project Committee
Funding: Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs

PRIME MOVERS

A resource book of blackline masters providing practice and problems for junior secondary mathematics students. (Published 1984; commercial distribution through Objective Learning Materials, also available from the Centre.)

Co-ordinator: Bruce Henry
Funding: Participation and Equity Program

MINISTERIAL PAPER NO.6 AND SCHOOL PROJECT

Development of a set of resources to assist schools in the implementation of Ministerial Paper No.6, with particular reference to establishing processes and conditions conducive to achieving curriculum balance and coherence. (In progress.)

Co-ordinator: John Atkinson

ILABLE

SMALL RURAL POST-PRIMARY SCHOOLS CURRICULUM PROJECT

Investigation of effective ways of achieving program comprehensiveness for post-primary students in small schools, particularly in rural areas.

Co-ordinator: Robin Matthews
Funding: Country Education Project

SCIENCE BACKGROUND OF TRAINEE TEACHERS

A project in collaboration with the Australian Council for Educational Research involving the use of tests to monitor the scientific understanding of pre-service teacher trainees. (Commenced 1984.)

Co-ordinator: Clive Kings

LEARNING MATERIALS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

i) Recreation and You (1981)

ii) Low Energy Housing (1982)

Classroom units for the secondary school based on 35 mm transparency sets (published and distributed by Education Media Australia).

Co-ordinator: Olga MacKenzie

iii) Family Trees

An activity unit for the Decade of the Tree; appropriate to Home Economics and Environmental Studies. (Published 1982; distributed by HETTA and also available from the Centre.)

Co-ordinator: Noel Gough

RESOURCES FOR TEACHING PHYSICAL EDUCATION

i) Teaching Ideas for Major Sports

A compilation of activities for sports teaching. (In progress.)

ii) The Rusden Manual for Safety in Physical Education

Guidelines for the prevention of accidents in physical education. (In progress.)

Co-ordinator: Ken Alexander

SCHOOL CURRICULUM SERIES

i) School Review and Curriculum Development

Report of a one-day workshop for school personnel, featuring Daniel L. Stufflebeam, Director, Evaluation Center, Western Michigan University. (Available from the Centre; edited by John Atkinson; 1981.)

ii) Policies and Practices for School Evaluation in the Eighties

Comprehensive report of a one-day workshop for invited participants, featuring Daniel L. Stufflebeam, the addressing ways in which evaluation can be used to enhance the effectiveness of schools. (Available from the Centre; edited by John Atkinson and Geoff Beesey; 1981.)

iii) Strategies for School-Based Curriculum Development in Home Economics Education

A manual for use by teachers. (In trial form; publication due 1985.)

Co-ordinator: Noel Gough

EVALUATION SERVICES

i) Residential Accommodation Needs of Country Students Attending Inner Urban TAFE Colleges

A needs assessment study undertaken for the TAFE Inner Urban Study. (Undertaken and completed, 1982.)

Co-ordinators: John Atkinson and Elaine Atkinson Funding: TAFE Board

ii) Evaluation Services for the Spastic Society of Victoria

Provision of evaluation services directed towards the ongoing development of the work of the Spastic Society's schools and other facilities throughout Victoria. (Commenced 1984.)

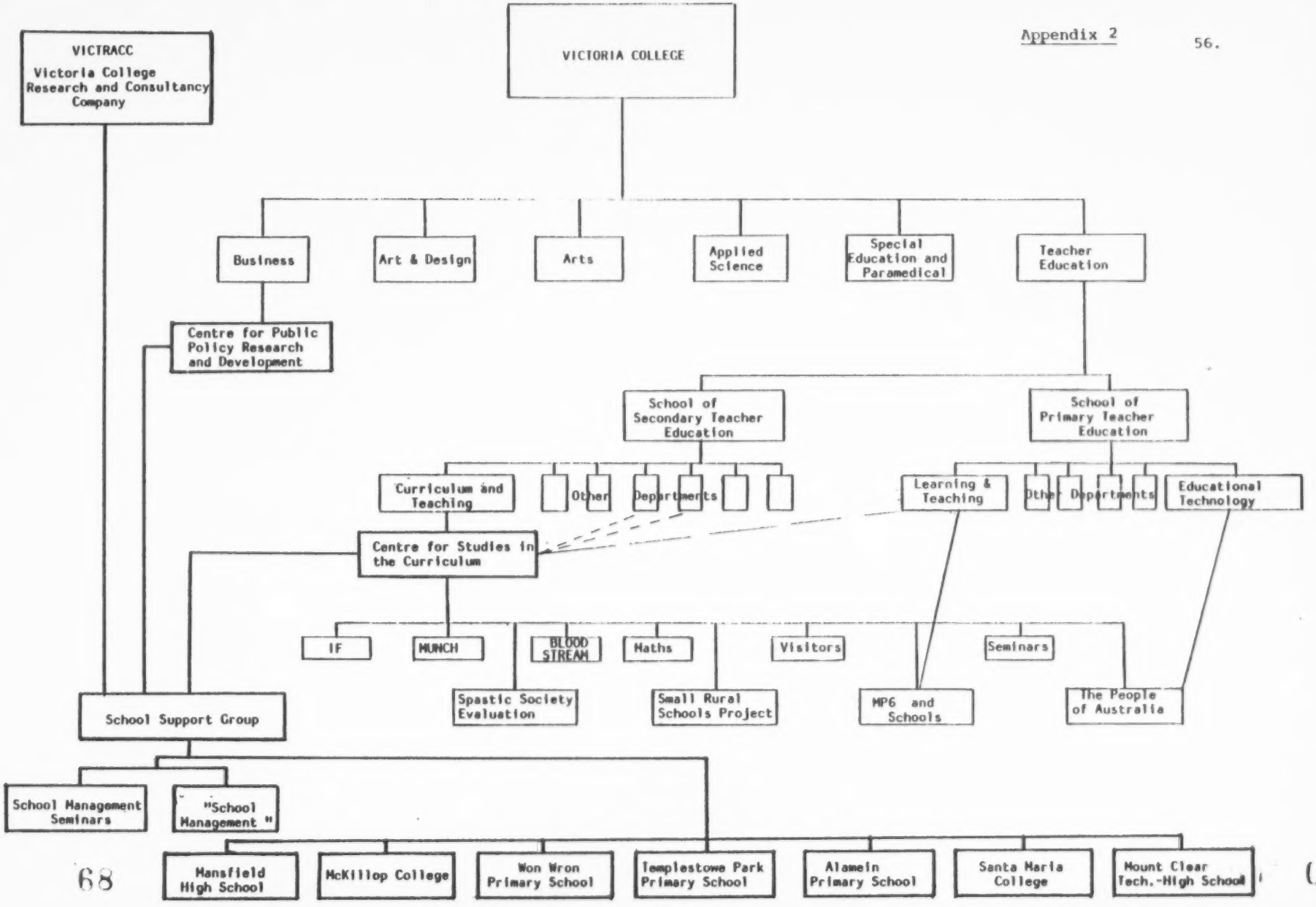
Co-ordinator: Geoff Trebilco Funding: Spastic Society of Victoria

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CONSULTANCY SERVICES

School Support Group

Provision of professional development programs and consultancy services to schools and other educational agencies and groups: a co-operative enterprise with the Centre for Public Policy Research and Development and offered through VICTRACC Ltd. (Commenced as a formal initiative in late 1984: 10 completed or current projects as at July, 1985.)

Co-ordinators: John Atkinson and Ron Fitzgerald Funding: Victoria College Innovation Grant and client schools.


VICTRACC
Victoria College Research and Consultancy Company
VICTORIA COLLEGE
Business
Art & Design
Arts
Applied Science
Special Education and Paramedical
Teacher Education
Centre for Public Policy Research and Development
School of Secondary Teacher Education
School of Primary Teacher Education
Curriculum and Teaching
Other Departments
Learning & Teaching
Other Departments
Educational Technology
Centre for Studies in the Curriculum
IF
MUNCH
BLOOD STREAM
Maths
Visitors
Seminars
Spastic Society Evaluation
Small Rural Schools Project
MP6 and Schools
The People of Australia
School Support Group
School Management Seminars
"School Management "
Hansfield High School
McKillop College
Won Wron Primary School
Templestowe Park Primary School
Alamein Primary School
Santa Maria College
Mount Clear Tech.-High School

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NAMES AND ADDRESSES OF PRESENTERS

Conference participants who would like to read any source documents or reports of activities referred to in any of the presentations made during this symposium should direct their queries to the relevant presenter whose full name and address is listed below.

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